

Department of Human Services

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Published March 14, 2007

Prosecutor seeks ruling on Ricky's remains

Lansing State Journal

The Ingham County Prosecutor's Office filed a petition today for a judge to make a ruling on what should happen with the remains of slain 7-year-old Ricky Holland.

Probate Judge George Economy will hear the case April 13.

Prosecutor Stuart Dunnings III on late Tuesday afternoon said his office is being represented by East Lansing attorney George Brookhover, who has extensive experience in probate matters.

Dunnings said his office has concerns about burying the remains. "We want to preserve their evidentiary value," he said.

Ricky's mother, Lisa Holland, was convicted last year of murder in his death. She is serving a mandatory life sentence and is not eligible for parole. His father, Tim Holland, was sentenced to 30 to 60 years in prison after pleading guilty to second-degree murder and testifying against Lisa. Dunnings said his office still is investigating the case.

"All of my questions have not been answered," he said. One option the prosecutor's office has discussed is burying Ricky in an above-ground crypt.

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ClickOnDetroit.com

Day Care Supervisor Accused Of Sexually Assaulting Children

POSTED: 2:43 pm EDT March 13, 2007
UPDATED: 8:35 pm EDT March 13, 2007

ADRIAN, Mich. -- Adrian police are investigating accusations that a man who ran a day care out of his home sexually assaulted several children who attended.

On March 9, police received a complaint of possible criminal sexual conduct involving minor children.

Police said 53-year-old Doug Clark, a life long Adrian resident, is facing charges of criminal sexual conduct in the first degree, which includes penetration.

Neighbors who talked to Local 4 said they were not even aware a day care was being run out of the home, and they added they hardly know the couple who lives there.

Police said the wife of the accused told them she was unaware of her husband's behavior.

Officers responded to the complaint and after initial investigation obtained a search warrant for and arrested Clark.

"It's sad that we wouldn't know that someone living that close to us could be like that," neighbor Don Lofton said. "We let our kids out here to play."

Police said when they searched the home they recovered evidence including child pornography, including pictures of the accused Clark allegedly engaging in sex acts with children in his care.

The children range in age from 3 to 13, and police said there are at least half a dozen victims.

Clark has no criminal record.

"I've been involved in law enforcement since 1968," Adrian Police Chief Terry Collins said. "This is probably the most grotesque thing I have seen in my whole career."

Police said the families of the victims wish to remain anonymous.

The day care was connected to a social club where people came to play cards.

Clark remains in jail on the criminal sexual conduct charge, and his bond was set at \$5 million.

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Organization: Michigan Department of Human Services**Date:** 3/14/2007

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Adrian daycare operator charged with child abuse

03/14/2007 © Adrian Daily Telegram

"It's devastating. My whole life is ruined, so are the children's," she said. Guardian Family Daycare, at 1013 Erie St., is licensed by the Michigan Department of Human Services and was last granted a license renewal in June 2005. Spokeswoman Maureen Sorbet said the state agency began an investigation of its own over the weekend. She said she cannot comment on pending investigations. Lenawee County Prosecutor Irving Shaw said his office was in contact with Adrian police over the weekend and received information for the single charge that was authorized on Monday. Shaw declined to comment on what he has learned of the investigation so far until written reports from Adrian police are turned in for review.

Imported: Mar 14 2007 2:25AM Indexed: Mar 14 2007 3:17AM

Article published March 14, 2007

Day care loses license after sex charge

Police: More counts likely against Adrian man

By BENJAMIN ALEXANDER-BLOCH
TOLEDO BLADE STAFF WRITER

ADRIAN - The Michigan Department of Human Services yesterday suspended the child day-care license of an Adrian man charged Monday with sexual conduct with a minor. Douglas Jay Clark, 52, is charged with a single charge of first-degree criminal sexual conduct, but Adrian City Police Chief Terry Collins said his department's ongoing investigation has identified numerous additional victims.

"We expect to file additional charges within the week," he said.

The single charge carries a maximum sentence of life in prison, according to Frank C. Riley, Lenawee County's chief assistant prosecuting attorney.

Mr. Clark was in Lenawee County Jail yesterday pending a \$5 million bond.

Guardian Family Daycare, 1013 Erie St., Adrian, received its initial three-year license in 2002 and then received a renewal in 2005, according to state DHS records.

Chief Collins said his department is attempting to identify how many children have passed through the center since 2002. He said officers are talking with all the families of children identified.

According to its license, Mr. Clark's family day-care home could care for a maximum of six children at any given time.

There are 16,500 licensed child-care facilities in Michigan and roughly 8,000 of those are family day-care homes, according to DHS spokesman Maureen Sorbet.

Officials at the Lenawee County Department of Human Services yesterday were transferring all calls to the state office.

Ms. Sorbet said the state agency began its own investigation of the child-care center on Monday and "we have summarily suspended the license."

A parent of a potential victim contacted the Adrian police department Friday, and officers obtained a search warrant and found substantiating evidence at the day-care center later that day, Chief Collins said.

Mr. Clark was arrested early Saturday morning and arraigned Monday.

A preliminary hearing is scheduled for 1 p.m. March 26 before Judge Natalia M. Koselka in Lenawee County District Court.

Chief Collins said the county department of human services has been contacted to help provide counseling to potential victims and their families.

Ms. Sorbet said the state agency does a criminal history background check of facility owners and operators before providing them with a license. She said officials also interview applicants and examine facilities before signing off on any licensing.

Contact Benjamin Alexander-Bloch
at: babloch@theblade.com
or 419-724-6168.



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Man sentenced for accosting 10-year-old boy

Posted by [From local reports](#) March 13, 2007 22:30PM

A 47-year-old Muskegon man has been sentenced to prison for asking a 10-year-old boy at Heritage Landing to perform oral sex.

Muskegon County Circuit Judge William C. Marietti last week ordered Gerald Kim Dempkey of 1080 Terrace, apartment 213, to prison for between two and 15 years for accosting a child for immoral purposes, with credit for five months already served in jail.

Dempkey pleaded no contest to the felony Feb. 2 and was sentenced as a fourth-time habitual offender.

In a separate case, Marietti sentenced Dempkey to the same prison term, to be served concurrently, for failing to register his address as a convicted sex offender.

The accosting happened last October. The child had been fishing alone at the Muskegon Lake shoreline park near downtown Muskegon.

In a newer case, Dempkey is scheduled for a 14th Circuit Court pretrial conference April 4 on charges of possessing a weapon while in jail, assault with a dangerous weapon and assault/resisting and obstructing officers. Those incidents occurred Jan. 31 in the Muskegon County Jail.

In that case, Dempkey is accused of threatening two other inmates with a "shank" made from a piece of sharpened, heavy-gauge wire about 6 inches long.

Jail deputies said they searched Dempkey and found the shank hidden in his right shoe. When two officers were moving him to a conference room for questioning, he allegedly turned on one of them, resulting in a struggle as officers handcuffed him.

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March 13, 2007

Parents demand anti-bullying laws

Gary Heinlein / Detroit News Lansing Bureau

LANSING -- Suzanne Harder watched in horror as a school videotape showed her son being punched repeatedly and having his head slammed against a bus seat by an older child.

"We had to have his nose cauterized," said Harder, of Holland. "He had repeated nosebleeds afterward."

Her description of one of at least three school bus assaults endured by her 8-year-old son Nathaniel was among several incidents recounted before a state House Committee today on legislation to require all Michigan schools to adopt policies against bullying.

The legislation, supported by Gov. Jennifer Granholm, would require the State Board of Education to develop a model anti-bullying policy for use by schools around the state.

House Education Committee Chairman Tim Melton, D-Auburn Hills, said he plans to send the two-bill package to the House floor next week--the third effort since 2001 to pass an anti-bullying law in Michigan.

The bills would require all public schools to prohibit bullying or harassment based such factors as a pupil's real or perceived religion, race, national origin, sexual orientation, disability or socioeconomic status.

Those presenting dramatic testimony included East Lansing resident Kevin Epling, whose 14-year-old son Matt committed suicide in 2003 after he was bullied by older students. Epling said the hazing included the boy's having syrup and raw eggs dumped on him.

The legislation will be named Matt's Safe School Law after the youngster, whose father has mounted a personal campaign to change the way such incidents are handled in schools.

Robin Greenwood, an 18-year-old senior at Dearborn High School, said she endures almost daily harassment because she is gay.

"People will push into me in the hallway and then pretend it was an accident," said Greenwood, who added that she is called mean names.

"I'm lucky enough to have a great support network, but emotionally the stuff does get to you," she said. "I know of three people who've dropped out because of the harassment."

The bills under consideration are House Bills 4091 and 4162. Sen. Glenn Anderson, D-Westland, plans to introduce Senate versions of the bills. Anderson sponsored similar legislation when he was in the House, during the last legislative session, but it didn't pass.

You can reach Gary Heinlein at (313) 222-2470 or gheinlein@detnews.com.

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Published March 14, 2007

Parents plead for passage of anti-bullying measure

House panel may vote soon on Matt's Safe School Law

By Susan Vela
Lansing State Journal

East Lansing resident Kevin Epling pleaded before a panel of state politicians Tuesday for the passage of Matt's Safe School Law, legislation recognizing a son who committed suicide after a 2002 hazing incident.

House Bill 4162 would require Michigan's public school districts and charter schools to adopt strict policies against bullying and encourage them to follow the state's anti-bullying policy model.

During the first serious action since Matt's Safe School Law was introduced last year, Epling testified in front of the House Education Committee.

"I don't want any student to go through what Matt did," he said, with his wife, Tammy, sitting nearby. "And I don't want any parent to go through what we did."

There were other painful stories given during two hours of testimony Tuesday. The committee will weigh the comments seriously when they vote, perhaps as early as March 20, on Matt's Safe School Law.

Sue Harder's voice broke as she told politicians that districts need state-mandated, anti-bullying policies.

Her 8-year-old son, Nate, once was assaulted almost daily by an older student on a Holland Public Schools bus.

She wasn't satisfied with the way the district handled the matter. Her own research revealed that a watchdog organization, Bully Police USA, had given Michigan an "F" grade for its anti-bullying laws and anti-bullying advocacy.

"That grade will change to an "A" if (Matt's Safe School Law) is passed," Harder said confidently.

Nate sat with her at the table in front of the House Education Committee. He swung his sneakers - back and forth, back and forth - beneath the chair.

What's next

- The House Education Committee could vote Tuesday to send House Bill 4162, legislation named after an East Lansing youth who committed suicide after a hazing incident, to the full House of Representatives.
- What you need to know about the bill: House Bill 4162 would require Michigan's public school districts and charter schools to adopt strict policies against bullying and encourage them to follow the state's anti-bullying policy model.
- Because of Matt's Safe School Law, Michigan's school districts and charter schools could be encouraged to adopt the state's anti-bullying policy model. Review its language by visiting www.michigan.gov/mde. Click on the "State Board of Education" link to the left. And then click on "policies."

"I wasn't afraid to go to school," the boy said after his mom's testimony. However, "I was afraid to get on the bus."

It took a year

Some committee members favor House Bill 4162.

Rep. Kathy Angerer, D-Dundee, admitted to disappointment when last year's version of the bill died.

"It's my intent to help you in any way possible to get this to the governor's desk," she told Tuesday's audience.

But there were concerns raised. Lisa Hansknecht, of the state Department of Education, said that the new legislation would cost a minimum of \$25,000.

And East Lansing lawyer Lisa Swern, whose law firm represents more than 450 school districts, testified there's no need for the exacting deadlines and consequences laid out in the original House Bill 4162.

Movement

Matt Epling was funny and friendly; a poet and an artist. Upper classman hazed Matt near his home on the last day of the 2001-02 school year. They smeared him with raw eggs and syrup.

Less than two months later, the 14-year-old took his own life as his parents prepared to discuss with police formal charges against Matt's assailants.

The older kids had been threatening to make Matt's freshman year miserable when they all returned to school.

Since then, the Eplings have shared their pain with others. They've also met with politicians to discuss Matt's Safe School Law, which they say will start a cultural shift against bullying in Michigan's schools.

The Eplings have worked closely with East Lansing Public Schools to stifle bullying.

Matt's Safe School Law, if approved, would require board action.

"The law would benefit us in having common vocabulary and similar expectations for behavior," said Debra Auge, principal of MacDonald Middle School.

She added that its shift from bill to law would probably be woven into MacDonald's instruction. Matt attended the school. He had just graduated from its program when he died.

Contact Susan Vela at 702-4248 or svela@lsj.com.



Lawmakers again consider anti-bullying policies for schools

3/13/2007, 2:12 p.m. ET

By **TIM MARTIN**
The Associated Press

LANSING, Mich. (AP) — Parents, students and school social workers were among those Tuesday urging state lawmakers to require Michigan schools to adopt anti-bullying and harassment policies.

Lawmakers — mostly Democrats — in the state Legislature are again trying to pass the bills, which have failed to make it into law in recent years.

Some lawmakers, primarily Republicans, have opposed the bills because they say they would take away control from local school boards to decide their own policies.

Others are concerned the legislation as written might not cover all potential cases of bullying and would protect students only in cases where they are being bullied for their sexual orientation, race, height or weight.

The State Board of Education already has anti-bullying and code of conduct model policies in place that districts could use if they wanted.

"It just seems a lot of policies already have been adopted," said Rep. John Moolenaar, R-Midland.

But supporters of the legislation say model policies that don't have the force of law and that schools have been slow to voluntarily adopt and enforce their own policies.

"It's not strong enough," said Rep. Pam Byrnes, a Democrat from Washtenaw County's Lyndon Township who is one of the legislation's sponsors. "Schools are not responding."

The legislation in the House would require schools to adopt policies prohibiting harassment and bullying. The policies would have to be submitted to the Michigan Department of Education.

While the content of the policies largely would be left for local schools to decide, they would have to include age-appropriate consequences for violations. There also would have to be a plan in place make sure that complaints about harassment or bullying are promptly investigated.

Schools also would have to have a policy in place to deal with reports about bullying that turn out to be false.

Sue Harder of Holland told the House Education Committee that her elementary-age son was beaten up on a school bus, but school officials have been slow to help.

"Schools will not do this voluntarily, and that's why we need this law," she said.

The bill would be named after Matt Epling, an East Lansing student who killed himself in 2002 after a bullying incident.

Some supporters of anti-bullying legislation said the measures debated Tuesday aren't strong enough because they don't include accountability measures for schools that don't comply.

Anti-bullying bills have been introduced in both the House and Senate this year.

The House Education Committee could vote next week on whether to send the bills to the full House.

The anti-bullying bills are House Bills 4091 and 4162 and Senate Bill 107.

Michigan Legislature: <http://www.legislature.mi.gov/>

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Michigan Report

March 13, 2007

ANTI-BULLYING LEGISLATION NEEDED, HOUSE PANEL TOLD

Anti-bullying legislation is needed to protect children because schools aren't doing enough, the House Education Committee members were told Tuesday.

The committee heard testimony on [HB 4162](#) and [HB 4091](#), which would require the Department of Education to develop a model anti-bullying policy and also require school districts to implement an anti-bullying policy and submit it to the department.

Similar bills were introduced in the last session but didn't go anywhere. Governor Jennifer Granholm as well as the Department of Education supports the bills.

Bullying based on religion, race, color, national origin, age, sex, sexual orientation, disability, height, weight, gender identity, socioeconomic status or any other "distinguishing characteristic" would be prohibited and would apply to bullying on school buses and at school-sponsored events as well as on school premises. Bullying that occurs using a telecommunications access device such as a computer would also be prohibited.

Bullying is defined as conduct that substantially interferes with educational opportunities, benefits or programs and places the student in reasonable fear of physical harm of by causing emotional distress. The bills require schools to include in their policies age-appropriate punishments as well as policies that make sure complaints of bullying and harassment are investigated.

"This legislation strengthens laws and protects students in the classroom and in the chatroom," [Rep. Pam Byrnes](#) (D-Chelsea) who sponsored HB 4162 said. "Bullying is a serious problem and the time has come to address the terrible consequences that occur when bullying is ignored as kids just being kids."

Ms. Byrnes said current school policies aren't doing enough because schools aren't required to have specific policies in place.

Some questioned whether the bills needed to specify the different categories of which characteristics bullying was prohibited on.

[Rep. Tom Pearce](#) (R-Rockford) said listing specific categories made it seem like the bill was about agendas and not helping children.

"Why list categories, why not just say bullying against anyone is prohibited?" Mr. Pearce said. "As new categories are thought up, does that mean we have to go back and change it?"

[Rep. John Moolenaar](#) (R-Midland) said outlining specific characteristics made the legislation seem less like protecting children and more about specific groups getting protection.

Ms. Byrnes said the more specific the bill was about what was prohibited the better and that bullying based on other characteristics not listed in the bill would also be prohibited.

“The more specific you are the easier it is to enforce,” Ms. Byrnes said.

[Rep. Jack Hoogendyk Jr.](#) (R-Texas Township) testified on behalf of Gary Glenn, president of the American Family Association who also said it was unfair to only list certain characteristics where bullying is prohibited.

“If there’s going to be a state mandate then it should ban bullying at all times for anything,” Mr. Glenn wrote in a statement Mr. Hoogendyk read. “All students should be protected.”

Mr. Glenn also said that a state mandate wasn’t needed because parents and school districts cared about the safety of children and were better suited to make policies.

But Sue Harder of Holland, who testified that a bully assaulted her son on a school bus, said the bully wasn’t sufficiently punished because schools aren’t required to develop policies.

“I’m not saying schools don’t care about children, but they need to get serious,” Ms. Harder said.

The committee also heard from East Lansing resident Kevin Epling, whose son Matt killed himself in 2002 after being bullied by older boys. Matt Epling was going to start the ninth grade in high school and was afraid of going to the police and talking about the ordeal, Kevin Epling said.

“Bullying is not what it used to be and we can no longer allow our children to walk in our same footsteps,” Mr. Epling said.

School districts aren’t doing enough to address the suffering bullying inflicts, adding that bullying can lead to depression and suicide.

“There needs to be a cultural shift in our schools,” Mr. Epling said. “This is a step in the right direction.”

Robin Greenwood, a senior at Dearborn High School who said she’s openly gay, said she suffers physical harassment and that school officials don’t do anything to address it. She said the bills needed to specify that harassment based on sexual orientation is prohibited.

“The vaguer it is the easier it is for local officials’ prejudices to come out,” Ms. Greenwood said.

Committee chair [Rep. Tim Melton](#) (D-Auburn Hills) said he expects the committee to send the bills to the full House at the meeting next week.



Slaying victim wrote of abuse, cousin says

March 14, 2007

BY KORIE WILKINS

FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

Daniella Erica Munoz kept a journal that described abuse at the hands of her boyfriend, her cousin said, and she told relatives in recent weeks where to look for her if she went missing -- his Dearborn Heights home or a Redford Township business.

"She was a smart girl," said her cousin Lori Saad. "She wrote a lot of stuff down."

Munoz, 26, of Detroit, who had been reported missing last week, was found dead Monday in the trunk of a car parked at A&H Express Lube in Redford Township.

Munoz died of a single gunshot wound to the neck, said Dr. Cheryl Loewe, deputy chief medical examiner for Wayne County.

Redford Township Police Sgt. Eric Kapelanski said a .45-caliber handgun was found inside the 1970s black Chevrolet Caprice Classic. The gun is believed to be the weapon used in the slaying, but it has not been confirmed, he said.

Family members reported Munoz missing after she failed to come home or check in by phone with her mother, Saad said.

Her boyfriend, Ali Hourany, is wanted for questioning. Redford Township Police Capt. Kraig Brueck said authorities believe he has fled the country, possibly to Lebanon. He has not been charged.

Munoz's car, a 1998 gold Dodge Stratus, was found by police Monday night in Dearborn Heights, Brueck said.

Family members did not like Munoz's on-again, off-again boyfriend and were unsupportive of the couple's relationship, Saad said. Munoz had talked of breaking things off for good with Hourany, Saad said, but she always went back to him.

"She was a good girl," Saad said. "She just wanted to be happy."

Munoz, who worked odd jobs, lived with her mother and grandmother. She would have turned 27 in April, her cousin said.

Ron Smith, spokesman for the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Detroit field office, said he did not have any information on Hourany.

Redford Township police are working with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security to track him, Brueck said.

The owner of the Caprice, who is not a suspect, had loaned the car to another person, police say.

Hourany was employed at A&H, but police have not revealed the exact relationship between Hourany and the business owner.

The Dearborn Heights resident who owns the building where the car was parked reported the body in the trunk to Dearborn Heights police Monday. Police are not releasing his name.

He is not a suspect, and it is unclear how he knew the body was inside the car. Dearborn Heights police did not return calls seeking comment Tuesday.

The Caprice reportedly had been parked in the A&H lot for a few days. The business has been closed since Saturday. No one answered the phone there Tuesday.

Brueck said Munoz apparently had been dead a few days. He said officials are not sure where she was killed.

Contact **KORIE WILKINS** at 248-351-5186 or kwilkins@freepress.com. Staff writer Naomi R. Patton contributed to this report.

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Man gets jail, probation in wife's death

FLINT

THE FLINT JOURNAL FIRST EDITION

Wednesday, March 14, 2007

By Paul Janczewski

pjanczewski@flintjournal.com • 810.766.6333

A Mt. Morris man was placed on a year's probation and jailed for 4 months in the death of his wife last March at an I-69 rest area.

During a tearful apology before sentencing, Patrick O. Martin, 55, told a judge that he was more concerned for his deceased wife's family than for himself.

Martin earlier pleaded no contest to negligent homicide for the March 16, 2006, incident at an I-69 rest area in Clayton Township in which his wife, Amy E. Martin, 21, was killed.

When Martin entered his plea some time ago, relatives of his wife asked a judge to refrain from sending him to jail.

But Genesee Circuit Judge Richard B. Yuille said he had to incarcerate Martin to send a message that may deter future actions by others.

He also ordered Martin to pay for the cost of his prosecution, as well as fines and court costs, but allowed him to have work release from the Genesee County Jail.

Yuille told Martin he was "not a bad person ... but made a bad decision." Yuille said he received many letters in support of Martin, many from the victim's relatives.

Attorney Kenneth R. Tucker, who represented Martin, said his client is in treatment and counseling.

Police and prosecutors said both had been drinking, and the death occurred about 7:15 p.m. after an argument led the couple to the rest area near Van Vleet Road. Police reports indicate Amy Martin demanded to be let out of the couple's van. When Patrick Martin sped off, he failed to notice his wife had caught her jacket on the door, and she was pulled along the vehicle, and likely run over by it.

A pathologist said she died from blunt force trauma to her head and chest. He also said she had a blood-alcohol level of 0.19 percent.

Police said Patrick Martin was given a portable Breathalyzer test, which showed he had a blood-alcohol level of 0.10 percent, and, a short time later, 0.08 percent.

In Michigan, a reading of 0.08 percent is the threshold for charging a person with drunken driving.

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Choice lacking for abused

03/14/2007 © Mt. Pleasant Morning Sun

In less time than it takes to read this sentence, an act of domestic violence will occur somewhere in the United States.

Advertisement

That's a staggering thought and sobering statistic.

The forms of domestic violence - forcible rape, verbal and physical abuse, stalking, and even homicide - are as many and varied as the abusers and their abused partners.

The word "typical" simply does not apply; there is no script or typecast character in this real-life drama that plays out every minute of every day on stages across the continent and around the world.

There is one commonality, however.

Choice.

Or, more accurately, the lack of it.

"A partner in a relationship that is healthy can choose to leave without fear of reprisal," says Angelita Gunn, assistant director of the Michigan Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Violence.

The ability to simply walk away does not exist in any relationship that is tainted with domestic violence.

That's even more difficult to absorb and comprehend than the statistics.

Sadly, you really do have to "be there" to appreciate the impact that domestic violence has on an individual's emotional, spiritual and physical well-being.

"As I now know, abusers have a tendency to intimidate and keep their partners in a situation where they feel they have no way out. When I tried to leave, he stalked me and my family and friends," says a neatly dressed lady who uses the name of Emily' for the purpose of this article.

Emily's relationship with the man who claimed to love her quickly devolved into a downward spiral of emotional and physical abuse.

Six years later - with multiple trips through the court system - she and her young child were taken to an area safehouse while arrangements were made to transfer them out of their home community to another safehouse.

Emily's description of her life - and lack of choice in leaving the abusive situation - is very familiar for counselors and professionals in the arena of domestic violence.

"There are many reasons why partners feel they can't leave - financial considerations, promises that the abuser will change, and fear for their children or other loved ones," says Holly White, sexual abuse therapist and counselor at Relief After Violent Encounter (RAVE) of Clinton and Shiawassee counties.

"Often, the final straw in making a decision to leave involves something happening to their child."

That was the trigger for Emily.

Words and threats common early in the relationship were eventually followed by acts of physical violence. Emily did leave on a number of occasions, but concern for the child that the couple had together always brought her back.

"He snatched our child three times - not out of love, but as a way to control me," she says. "He was charged and convicted several times, and the prosecutor still let him back out - they said he had completed the anger management program. I felt like I was beat up by the justice system as well as by him."

As is the case in many situations involving domestic violence, Emily's partner employed verbal and emotional tactics in the early stages of their relationship.

"He began to be emotionally, mentally and spiritually abusive at the onset - he knew the depth of love I had for my children and he tried to strip me of that," she said of the pattern that quickly developed related to her older children from a previous marriage. "He slowly alienated me from my children, my family, my friends."

Controlling behavior, jealousy and verbal abuse can all be signals of abusive personalities, Gunn says.

"They believe that their partner is there to provide only for their own emotional needs; they may want to know where they're at all times, and become unreasonably angry when they arrive home later than expected - they may even check the mileage on the car, or control what kind of clothing is worn."

Other common characteristics of potential abusers include blaming the other partner for their own anger, "I wouldn't have acted that way - you made me angry;" verbal abuse, particularly demeaning comments in front of other people, "How can you be so dumb?"; and various types of sexual abuse.

"Abusers may coerce a partner to have sex, or force them to do sexual things they aren't comfortable with," Gunn says, noting that adherence to rigid sex roles - the honor and obey' mentality - may also be a potential warning sign.

Although individuals may display certain characteristics, it doesn't necessarily mean they will be abusive. Even more problematic is the fact that abusers are very good at playing the role of 'Mr. Jekyll' - before Dr. Hyde emerges.

"Quite often, abusers will put their best foot forward early in a relationship," White says. "They can be charming, and even after an episode takes place, are very good at saying they're sorry. The partner wants to believe - 'He's serious about changing this time.'"

Testing that resolve can be a way out of a potentially damaging relationship.

"Early on, if a person feels uncomfortable with things that are said or done, they should try to talk about it," Gunn says. "If the person is amenable to getting help, that may be a positive sign - if they're not willing, it's a good indicator that the situation will worsen over time."

Even taking that one, small step of initiating a conversation can be problematic - and leaving doesn't always mean the abuser will give up on the relationship.

"Where domestic violence has already occurred in a relationship, walking out the door can put the partner at even greater risk," Gunn says. "They really have no control over the abuser and what action may result from their leaving. Unfortunately, we continue to hear about too many cases where the abuser tracks down the partner."

"An abused partner in a situation involving domestic violence really doesn't have an equal choice."



Legislation no place for vengeance

March 14, 2007

BY BRIAN DICKERSON

FREE PRESS COLUMNIST

Journalists and politicians both thrive on popular indignation. People like me turn that anger into newspaper columns, which can be placed in the recycling bin when our outrage cools. People like state Rep. David Law, R-Commerce Township, turn the public's anger into legislation, which also is biodegradable until other lawmakers adopt it.

The problem arises when a bill designed to appease the public's outrage over a particular incident becomes a law that must be applied in many disparate circumstances.

A few such bills are drawn precisely enough to avoid collateral damage. But more often they're about as surgical as a suicide bomber, spraying unintended consequences far beyond their primary targets.

Ready, fire, aim

Take, for example, Michigan's sex offender registry, conceived more than a decade ago to alert parents to the proximity of sexual predators. Today the registry is an unwieldy, chronically outdated database that lumps promiscuous teenagers with serial pedophiles, destroying more lives than it protects.

Or the notorious drug-lifer laws, mandated by legislators eager to crack down on drug kingpins, which have been invoked mostly to warehouse small-time junkies and expendable mules.

Or the statute that mandates harsher punishment for offenders who have sex during the commission of a felony. Although the statute was designed to penalize the most dangerous sexual offenders, the Michigan Court of Appeals recently pointed out that, as currently written, it could be construed to prescribe life imprisonment for anyone involved in a consensual adulterous relationship.

Are some victims more precious?

Now comes Law, promoting a bill that that would classify any homicide resulting from domestic violence as a mandatory life offense, whether or not prosecutors could prove that it was premeditated.

Law says the need became apparent last year, when an Oakland County jury declined to convict Christopher Lucas of first-degree murder in the stomping death of his girlfriend's mother. Prosecutors complained that Lucas, 25, could be paroled when he is 85.

The bill also may get a boost from public outrage over the death of Tara Grant. Her husband, Stephen, faces a mandatory life term, but only if prosecutors can prove premeditation.

The public appetite for exceptional penalties in both cases is understandable, but not necessarily logical. Why should homicide compel a lesser penalty when the victim is the killer's neighbor than when the victim is the killer's spouse?

It's not as though domestic abusers typically avoid any serious consequences for killing their spouses. And even Oakland County Prosecutor David Gorcyca concedes Law's initiative won't save a single life.

At best, Law's bill is an effort to assuage outrage over a specific crime with a mandate that would bind judges and juries in every similar case. At worst, it's an attempt to exploit that outrage for political gain.

Either way, victims of domestic violence deserve a more thoughtful memorial.

Contact **BRIAN DICKERSON** at 248-351-3697 or bdickerson@freepress.com.

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March 14, 2007

Top Democrats Propose Expanding Health Insurance for Children

By [ROBERT PEAR](#)

WASHINGTON, March 13 — Two of the most influential voices on health policy, Representative [John D. Dingell](#) and Senator [Hillary Rodham Clinton](#), offered a bill Tuesday to expand the Children's Health Insurance Program, as Democratic leaders in both houses said they would try to triple spending on the program over the next five years.

The bill will be the basis for House efforts to reshape the program, which expires Sept. 30, and will be a building block of Mrs. Clinton's presidential campaign platform. Mr. Dingell's priorities are important because he is chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, which has authority over the program.

Neither Mr. Dingell, a Michigan Democrat, nor Mrs. Clinton, a New York Democrat, said how they would pay for the proposal, which would increase federal spending over the next five years by at least \$50 billion — a figure tentatively endorsed by Democratic leaders in the two chambers. Both lawmakers said they would find ways to offset the cost.

Over the course of a year, the program, financed jointly by the federal government and the states, provides health insurance to six million children in families that have too much income to qualify for Medicaid but not enough to buy private insurance. About nine million children, or 12 percent of all people under the age of 19, are uninsured.

Under the bill, virtually all uninsured children would have access to coverage of some type, with or without federal subsidies. Mr. Dingell and Mrs. Clinton would give states financial incentives to cover children with family incomes up to four times the poverty level. A family of three is considered poor if its annual income is less than \$17,170. Thus, the bill would allow the federal government to pay subsidies for coverage of children in a three-person family with annual income up to \$68,680.

That is higher than the limit in any state. In January, 24 states had limits at 200 percent of the poverty level, 10 had lower limits and 16 had higher ceilings. New Jersey covered children up to 350 percent of the poverty level. Gov. [Eliot Spitzer](#) of New York has proposed increasing the limit to 400 percent, from 250 percent.

The latest budget request from President Bush would move in the opposite direction. He proposed reducing federal payments for children with family incomes above 200 percent of the poverty level, saying that would return the program to its "original objective."

Under the Dingell-Clinton bill, states could allow employers and parents to buy coverage through the Children's Health Insurance Program. States could subsidize the premiums, and the federal government would help pay the cost in states that expanded their programs to cover children with family incomes up to four times the poverty level.

The bill would encourage employers to maintain coverage for children of employees, and would give small businesses a place to buy such coverage if they did not now provide it.

Since the collapse of the Clinton administration plan for universal coverage in 1994, Mrs. Clinton has not set forth a comprehensive proposal to achieve that goal, although some other candidates for the Democratic presidential nomination, like [John Edwards](#), have done so. Mrs. Clinton described her bill as a step toward universal coverage.

The federal government is spending \$5 billion on the program this year and would spend \$25 billion over the next five years if spending continued at current levels.

The chairman of the Senate Finance Committee, [Max Baucus](#), Democrat of Montana, and the chairman of the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health, Frank Pallone Jr., Democrat of New Jersey, said Tuesday that they were seeking an additional \$50 billion over the next five years, which would triple the current level of spending.

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Organization: Michigan Department of Human Services**Date:** 3/14/2007

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States say Medicaid rule hurts citizens

03/14/2007 © Detroit News

WASHINGTON -- A new federal rule intended to keep illegal immigrants from receiving Medicaid has instead shut out tens of thousands of U.S. citizens who have had difficulty complying with requirements to show birth certificates and other proof-of-citizenship documents, state officials say.

Florida, Iowa, Kansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Ohio and Virginia have all reported declines in enrollment and traced them to the new federal requirement, which comes as state officials around the country are striving to expand coverage through Medicaid and other means.

Under a 2006 federal law, the Deficit Reduction Act, most people who say they are U.S. citizens and want Medicaid must provide "satisfactory documentary evidence of citizenship," which could include a passport or the combination of a birth certificate and a driver's license.

Some state officials say the Bush administration went beyond the law in some ways -- for example, by requiring people to submit original documents or copies certified by the issuing agency.

"The largest adverse effect of this policy has been on people who are American citizens," said Kevin W. Concannon, director of the Department of Human Services in Iowa, where the number of Medicaid recipients dropped by 5,700 in the second half of 2006, to 92,880, after rising for five years. "We have not turned up many undocumented immigrants receiving Medicaid in Waterloo, Dubuque or anywhere else in Iowa," Concannon said.

Jeff Nelligan, a spokesman for the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, said the new rule was "intended to ensure that Medicaid beneficiaries are citizens without imposing undue burdens on them" or on states.

"We are not aware of any data that shows there are significant barriers to enrollment," Nelligan said. "But if states are experiencing difficulties, they should bring them to our attention."

In Florida, the number of children on Medicaid declined by 63,000, to 1.2 million, from July 2006 to January of this year.

"We've seen an increase in the number of people who don't qualify for Medicaid because they cannot produce proof of citizenship," said Albert A. Zimmerman, a spokesman for the Florida Department of Children and Families. "Nearly all of these people are American citizens."

Since Ohio began enforcing the document requirement in September, the number of children and parents on Medicaid has declined by 39,000, to 1.3 million, and state officials attribute most of the decline to the new requirement.

Rhiannon M. Noth, 28, of Cincinnati applied for Medicaid in early December. When her 3-year-old son, Landen, had heart surgery on Feb. 22, she said, "he did not have any insurance" because she had been unable to obtain the necessary documents. For the same reason, she said, she paid out-of-pocket for his medications, and eye surgery was delayed for her 2-year-old daughter, Adrianna.

The children eventually got Medicaid, but the process took 78 days, rather than the 30 specified in Ohio Medicaid rules.

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Organization: Michigan Department of Human Services**Date:** 3/14/2007

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Congress needs to change how federal foster-care funds provided

03/14/2007 © Battle Creek Enquirer

It's been three years since the Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care came out with its recommendations on helping provide permanent families for kids whose lives have been filled with trauma and upheaval. The report also advocated for greater help and support for those children in foster care who reach age 18 and suddenly find themselves on their own with nowhere to turn. This week on Capitol Hill, some of those young people testified about their lives going from one foster home to another, and their failure to find a permanent family. Others told of the fears they faced when they were no longer eligible for foster care and had to forge their own lives with little guidance and few resources. ADVERTISEMENT Their testimony was part of a push by the Pew Commission and the North American Council on Adoptable Children to give states more flexibility in using federal funds for the best interest of the children involved. Too often, states don't get federal child welfare money until after a child is taken away from his or her family and put into state custody. That gives states a financial incentive to take children out of their homes, rather than working with parents to resolve issues and keep families together. In cases where parents should not regain custody of their children, sometimes reliable relatives are able to take custody instead of the children being placed in foster care. Policies need to be shaped to encourage, rather than discourage, such arrangements. With more than a half-million U.S. children in foster care - twice as many as 20 years ago - the Pew Commission was established to study ways to help improve their lives. Members sought ways restructure funding to help keep families intact or place children in permanent families sooner, instead of an ongoing series of foster homes. At the time they issued their report in 2004, Pew Commission members acknowledged that the foster care system had helped remove many children from unsafe, unhealthy family environments, but it needed to do a better job of moving them into permanent homes. In addition to placing children with permanent families, Congress also is being lobbied to increase funding for medical and therapeutic help for children adopted out of foster care, and to better prepare foster children who "age out" of the system and are left basically on their own at age 18. We supported implementation of many of the commission's recommendations when they were issued three years. The need has not subsided since then. Reforms are needed urgently. While three years may not seem like a long time in the federal bureaucracy, we need to remember that for every year that goes by, another 24,000 children "graduate" from the foster care system and must face life by themselves. They need more support if they are to become successful adults. We hope Congress agrees and acts soon. Post a Comment This article does not have any comments associated with it Originally published March 14, 2007

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ourMidland.com
from the Midland Daily News

03/14/2007

State: Colonial Villa needs license

By [Angela E. Lackey](#)

The state has determined that Colonial Villa of Midland does require a license.

"As the facility was running on Feb. 27, '07, it is our conclusion they need a license to operate the facility," said Maureen Sorbet, Department of Human Services spokeswoman.

Colonial Villa and its parent company, Tendercare Inc., will work with the state's licensing agency to obtain a license. Sorbet said there is no set timeline in which Colonial Villa will need to be licensed. Tendercare Inc. and Colonial Villa did not return Daily News calls for comment.

The Midland assisted living facility has been under investigation by the Department of Human Services since Feb. 20. About 50 senior citizens live in the facility's private efficiency apartments.

Sorbet said room and board housing, which many people refer to as assisted living and in which a person is paying to live in somebody's house where meals are provided, does not require a license. But other senior living facilities, such as those that dispense medications or help residents with daily living activities, could require licensing.

Tendercare Inc.'s website, www.tendercare.net/, advertises that Colonial Villa provides a variety of services, including hospice care, assistance with activities of daily living, routine health monitoring and medication assistance.

Adult foster care and homes for the aged are licensed and overseen by DHS. Nursing homes are licensed by the state Department of Community Health.

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Published March 14, 2007

Salvation Army drive a hit

New store benefits from ongoing campaign

By Christine Rook
Lansing State Journal

Two weeks into a 3 1/2-week collection campaign, the Salvation Army has garnered \$24,000 in donated items from Greater Lansing residents.

The merchandise will help fill a new 21,000-square-foot Salvation Army store that opened on West Saginaw Street in Lansing Township early last month.

The group hopes to open three more similarly sized stores in Lansing over the next two years.

"People like to shop," said Jack Zamudio, a Salvation Army administrator at the district's headquarters in Flint. The district encompasses the Lansing area, Oakland County and Midland.

The Salvation Army employs 160 people throughout the district, 24 of them at the Lansing store, which is touted as a family shop with up to 70 percent of its merchandise aimed at women. The store replaces a roughly 700-square-foot shop in Delta Township.

The donation drive began Feb. 27 after 5,000 cards were mailed to homes throughout the area.

Residents were asked to bag items such as clothing and small appliances and set them out for pickup.

Ten percent of the residents responded, donating enough stuff to fill 12 trucks.

This is the second year for the February-March drive, said Leah LaRose, who supervises the Salvation Army's 10 stores in the Flint district.

"It's quite successful," she said.

Normally, the annual collection drive nets a 7 percent to 8 percent response rate. The higher rate this winter is welcome.



(Photo by BECKY SHINK/Lansing State Journal)
New store: Salvation Army Family Store employee Bertha Celedon, of Lansing, arranges clothing Monday afternoon.

To donate

- The Salvation Army accepts donations of clothing, household items and furniture. You can take items directly to the Salvation Army store at 5206 W. Saginaw Highway in Lansing Township.

"In order to survive," Zamudio said, "this store needs about 150 donations a day."

Contact Christine Rook at 377-1261 or clrook@lsj.com.

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Supplemental Opens Pandora's Box

MIRS, March 13, 2007

Senators yelled at each other about everything from leadership to the budget after they unanimously passed a \$58.4 million supplemental that will allow the Department of Corrections (DOC), Department of Human Services (DHS) and the State Police (MSP) to pay bills left over from last fiscal year.

The three departments overspent their Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 budgets by \$162.9 million and needed a supplemental to pay vendors that have been waiting to be paid. The Senate unanimously passed **SB 0166** as passed by the House so the departments can pay the bills.

Then, the body unanimously agreed to the House version of **SB 0184**, which would require all state departments to tell the Legislature in June if it might go over budget. When **SB 0184** originally passed the Senate it was tie-barred to **SB 0166** so the departments would have to abide by the reporting requirement in order to get their money.

However, the tie bar was taken out in the House despite resistance from House Republicans who refused to give **SB 0166** immediate effect to protest the removal of the tie bar (See "**Dems Fast Gavel I.E. On Supplemental**," 3/7/07).

Today, the Senate unanimously passed **SB 0184** without even attempting to put the tie bar back in. For a moment, it even appeared that Senate Republicans would just let the issue go. But that wasn't the case.

Sen. Michelle **McMANUS** (R-Lake Leelanau) started the debate after both bills were passed by accusing the governor of not being accountable for her department's actions.

"Michigan has a spending problem," McManus said. "You know it and I know it, but I'm not sure the governor knows it, yet."

She then stated that the Senate would do the "responsible thing" and pay the state's bills, but warned the governor that she would have to be responsible for her departments.

Sen. Deb **CHERRY** (D-Burton) took the stage and, after throwing out the \$3 billion number that the Dems keep insisting is the state's total budget deficit, reiterated the Democratic argument that the departments told the Legislature three times that they were expecting to be over budget.

"I find it outrageous that we think that they did something horribly wrong," she said.

Then Sen. Buzz **THOMAS** (D-Detroit) used the Standard & Poor's ratings released Tuesday that said Michigan is the only state facing a negative credit rating outlook, as

ammo against the Republican caucus (See "[Standard & Poors — Promptness Key For MI Credit Outlook](#)," 3/12/07). The report attributed the rate to the state's budget deficits and unsure tax structure.

Thomas said the state has this rating "because this Legislature has shown zero leadership in moving forward and fixing the state's budget problem."

After blaming each other for the inflated budget deficit, departmental overspending and the state's credit rating, Sen. Alan **CROPEY** (R-DeWitt) took a dig at the governor and blamed her for playing politics.

The departments knew of the over expenditures in mid-October 2006, but didn't tell the Legislature until mid-November, which was a nice way to prevent the budget problems from interfering with the election, Cropsey said.

"It just happened to be a Tuesday after the first month in which the governor was running for re-election," Cropsey said about the day the department's decided to tell the Legislature about the over expenditures.

Both Sen. Mickey **SWITALSKI** (D-Roseville) and Sen. Bruce **PATTERSON** (R-Canton) stood up during the debate to simply remind everyone they did their job by passing the supplemental. They were the only two speakers that didn't take a swipe at the other side.

"Before you get too worked up, let's remember we did do our job today," Switalski said.

After Switalski made his comments, several more Senators stood up and hammered the other side, including Senate Majority Leader Mike **BISHOP** (R-Rochester) and Senate Minority Leader Mark **SCHAUER** (D-Battle Creek). Bishop said he still plans on doing something about the over expenditure and Schauer said he still hasn't seen a tax plan.

"What is your plan? We don't know," Schauer said.

Sen. Nancy **CASSIS** (R-Nov) countered Schauer by asking why the Democrats keep sitting on the governor's plan instead of moving it forward.

After the Senators aired all of the dirty laundry that's been piling up for weeks, session was adjourned.

Michigan Report

March 13, 2007

ADMINISTRATION ACCUSED OF CONSPIRACY, CORRUPT BEHAVIOR AS SUPPLEMENTAL APPROVED

Senate Republicans charged that Governor Jennifer Granholm “conspired” to hide spending problems and that ongoing problems amounted to “corrupt behavior” on the part of the administration, as the chamber unanimously approved legislation that will allow the state to close the books

The Senate approved [SB 166](#) unanimously with no controversy, but that seeming amity belied the outrage Senate Republicans showed during the statement stage of the session.

To GOP charges that the administration’s hiding of overspending and alleged fiscal mismanagement shows that the citizens should not be asked for more taxes, Democrats retorted that the Republicans still have not shown their proposals for solving the current budget deficit.

Only [Sen. Michael Switalski](#) (D-Roseville) tried to bridge the divide by saying that Senate members should reflect on the unanimous approval of SB 166 and [SB 184](#) (which sets requirements for notifying the Legislature of potential overspending by a department) and move forward.

And a spokesperson for Ms. Granholm said the criticism “sounds like a diversion” from acting on the state’s budget.

With SB 166 now going to the governor, the state will be able to close the books on the 2005-06 fiscal year by March 31 as required by law.

Greg Bird, spokesperson for the State Budget Office, called passage of the supplemental a “very good first step. We are now looking forward to seeing what the Senate Republican plan is to solve the current budget crisis.”

Administration officials hope that Senate and House members will be able to agree on a proposal to end the projected deficit for the 2006-07 fiscal year through discussions that are still supposed to be ongoing this week. Officials, however, are preparing a new proposal for an executive order budget cut. Ms. Granholm must issue a letter alerting the Legislature to another executive order by the end of the week.

Closing the 2005-06 budget was held up because the state needed a supplemental appropriation to cover overspending that occurred in the departments of Corrections, Human Services and State Police.

The Senate also acted one day after both the Senate Appropriations Committee held a hearing on delayed payments by Corrections to its health care vendor and Standard &

Poor's issued a report effectively saying the Legislature needed to boost taxes to help resolve the state's budget problem.

The Senate GOP outburst was in some ways an angry coda to both events.

[Sen. Michelle McManus](#) (R-Lake Leelanau) started the verbal fracas when she charged that the Legislature was taking responsibility for the overspending problems of the state. "The governor must be accountable for her department's actions," Ms. McManus said.

[Sen. Deborah Cherry](#) (D-Burton) blasted back that the Legislature had known about the overspending problems for some months and that strict limits had been put on those departments. Then Senate Minority Floor Leader [Sen. Buzz Thomas](#) (D-Detroit) said, "This Legislature has shown no leadership, zero leadership to solve this budget."

But Senate Majority Floor Leader [Sen. Alan Cropsey](#) (R-DeWitt) charged that the overspending by the three departments was not released until after the November election to ensure it would have no effect on the election.

Other Republicans, including Michigan Republican Chair Saul Anuzis, have raised the election coverup charge before, but Mr. Cropsey carried it further by charging, "this governor and this administration conspired to make sure the Legislature didn't know about it."

Mr. Cropsey said it was "a shame that the people voted for a chief executive of this state who covered up" the overspending.

And he called it offensive that former Budget Director Mary Lannoye was not fired for failing to tell the Legislature about the overspending, but was promoted to Ms. Granholm's chief of staff. The administration did meet with the Senate Fiscal Agency and House Fiscal Agency about potential overspending last summer, but in December Ms. Lannoye apologized for not informing legislators about the extent of the problem until after the election.

And Senate [Majority Leader Mike Bishop](#) (R-Rochester) said the overspending made him angry. "By voting for the supplemental we have bailed out this department who was fiscally irresponsible for the taxpayers," he said.

"If this vote confirms anything it is that state government needs to be reined in. Until we can do that, we ought not to go to the people and ask for more money," Mr. Bishop said.

He charged that the administration "arrogantly" showed "blatant disregard" for state policies. And he said the "permissive attitude" about spending shows "corrupt behavior" on the part of the administration. "The citizens of this state have a right to demand we get our house in order," he said.

And [Sen. Nancy Cassis](#) (R-Novi) said the approval of the supplement showed the Legislature's "censure" of the overspending.

But Liz Boyd, Ms. Granholm's spokesperson, said the overspending issue has been addressed, with the administration imposing spending controls on those departments. To complain about that issue now "smacks of a diversion from the real issues that is before lawmakers and that is the \$3 billion hole in the budget today," she said.

Organization: Michigan Department of Human Services**Date:** 3/14/2007

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Investing in children could boost economy, legislators are told

03/14/2007 © Detroit Free Press

March 13, 2007 By JACK KRESNAK

FREE PRESS STAFF WRITER

LANSING Despite a state budget deficit of more than \$900 million, cutting programs that help children could actually make Michigans economic viability worse, a childrens advocacy group said today.

The Michigan Coalition for Children and Families, which has more than 70 member agencies and individuals from a range of disciplines including health care, social work and education, presented its annual Childrens Agenda to state legislators during a five-hour briefing in the Capitol.

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The agenda urges more investment in programs that help children develop before birth and in early childhood as well as in programs that prevent child abuse and neglect.

With all the talk about jobs and getting people to work now, we cannot forget that our current investments in childrens health and education will affect our job base in the next generation, said MCCF cochair Michele Strasz, who also directs community outreach for the Michigan Council for Maternal and Child Health.

Prevention programs that help kids avoid becoming school dropouts and juvenile delinquents give Michigan its greatest return on investment in the next generation of children, Strasz said.

The agenda, which is available at www.MICCF.org, says the percentage of Michigan children classified as living in poverty has gone up 31% and the number of victims of child abuse and neglect has increased 5% since 2001. One in five Michigan infants is born to a mother who had inadequate prenatal care and nearly 1,000 babies in the state die each year before their first birthday.

We need to acknowledge that were not doing a good job by our kids, Strasz said. Were not investing, and we are not putting our money where our mouth is. The rhetoric says we are taking care of kids, but the investments are not proving that to be true.

The coalition calls for the dollar-for-dollar replacement of the \$2 billion in revenues lost by abolishing the Single Business Tax. The organizations recommended that a proposed new tax on state services be specifically earmarked for programs for children.

If you put your mind to it, you can do it, Strasz told legislators and aides who attended the briefing.

Rep. Jim Marleau, R-Lake Orion, listened to the groups message but said state government, especially school districts, can become more cost-efficient and must address the high costs of health care for retired educators.

Raising any tax should be a last resort, Marleau said. We do not have a tax problem, weve got a spending problem.

Contact JACK KRESNAK at 313-223-4544 or jkresnak@freepress.com.

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03/14/2007

Officials may pour about \$350,000 into leaky Alpine Center roof

BY SHERI MCWHIRTER
smcwhirter@record-eagle.com

GAYLORD — The third floor of the Alpine Center government building leaks.

It leaks badly, and it's going to cost taxpayers about \$350,000 to fix the problem.

Virtually every window and air-conditioner unit leaks rainwater on the third floor of Otsego County's office and court building in Gaylord and has done so for the last 15 years, officials said.

"I don't know if you'd call it severe, but we do have water problems," said Dale Fulcher, building and grounds director for Otsego County.

The building houses the offices and courtrooms for the 87th District Court, county probation offices and Michigan State University Extension.

Leaking began after 1991 renovations, when asbestos removal was completed. Windows and air conditioners apparently were not properly installed, Fulcher said.

Maintenance workers have chased down leaks, removed soggy drywall, rebuilt and painted walls. There's no telling how much that has cost over the years in materials, time and labor, Fulcher said.

Now is the time to make permanent repairs, while the space is vacant, officials said. Local offices of the Michigan Department of Human Services moved this year to another site on Walden Drive in Gaylord.

Preliminary estimates are around \$350,000 to make the needed repairs, said John Burt, county administrator.

The money to pay for the improvements will come partly from the county's general fund and mostly from the public improvement fund, to be paid back with court restoration dollars collected in coming years. Money saved last year through employee insurance changes and leaving vacant jobs unfilled also will be used, Burt said.

Members of the Otsego County Board of Commissioners on Tuesday unanimously approved fund transfers needed before the work can be designed and put out to bid.

Next, the board likely will be asked to approve a contract for engineering services, Burt said.

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JENNIFER M. GRANHOLM
GOVERNOR

STATE OF MICHIGAN
DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
LANSING

MARIANNE UDOW
DIRECTOR

News Release

Contact: Maureen Sorbet - (517) 373-7394

**Michigan Department of Human Services Summarily Suspends
the Family Day Care Home Certificate of Registration License Number DF460248442 of
Douglas Clark, Guardian Family Day care**

March 14, 2007

The Michigan Department of Human Services (DHS), Office of Children and Adult Licensing issued an order of summary suspension and notice of intent to revoke the certificate of registration of Lenawee County family day care home provider Douglas Clark, 1013 Erie Street, Adrian, Michigan. This action resulted from a recent investigation of a complaint of the child day care family home.

The March 12, 2007, complaint investigation found violations of the Child Care Organizations Act and administrative rules requiring appropriate care and supervision, and caregiver's responsible character and suitability to provide for children's needs. OCAL took emergency action to protect the health, welfare, and safety of children.

Effective 6:00 p.m., March 13, 2007, the Summary Suspension Order prohibits Douglas Clark from operating a family day care home at 1013 Erie Street, Adrian, Michigan, or at any other address or location. Accordingly, he may not accept children for care after that date and time. The order also requires Mr. Clark to inform all of the parents of children in his care that his certificate of registration has been suspended and that he can no longer provide day care.

Mr. Clark has held a certificate of registration to operate a family day care home since July 22, 2002. The certificate of registration was for six children.

Michigan law defines a day care family home "as a private home in which 1 but fewer than 7 minor children are received for care and supervision for periods of less than 24 hours a day, unattended by a parent or legal guardian, except children related to an adult member of the family by blood, marriage, or adoption."

For more information, consult DHS Web site at www.michigan.gov/dhs.